Gonorrhea — Alaska, 2007

In 2007, the highest documented gonorrhea case rates were among females aged 20–24 and 25–29 years (446 and 306 per 100,000 persons, respectively) and males aged 20–24 years (277 per 100,000 persons; Figure 2). From 2006 to 2007, the greatest decreases in rates occurred among females aged 15–19 and 30–34 years (a decrease of 57 cases per 100,000 population, respectively). Rates increased among Alaska Native/American Indian males and black females (an increase of 4 cases per 100,000 persons [3%] and 14 cases per 100,000 persons [6%], respectively).

Figure 3. Gonorrhea Rates, by Race and Sex — Alaska, 2007 (N=581)*

* Cases of unknown race for 2 males and 2 females are not included in the figure.

Discussion

Although Alaska’s GC rates have been relatively stable since 2003 and our 2007 rate is below the 2006 national rate of 120.9 cases per 100,000 population, we are still well above the federal Healthy Persons 2010 national target of 19 cases per 100,000 population per year. Furthermore, the cost in terms of the threat to the health and reproductive capacity of Alaskans constitute ample grounds for concern.

To this end, the HIV/STD Program staff collaborate with public and private health care providers throughout Alaska to deliver quality comprehensive clinical services and partner notification activities that focus services to those at highest risk for an STD – those exposed to a known positive case.

Recommendations

1. Health care providers should refer to CDC’s Updated Sexually Transmitted Diseases Treatment Guidelines, 2006 Recommendations and Reports for current Neisseria gonorrhoeae treatment recommendations (available at: http://www.cdc.gov/std/gonorrhea.htm).

2. Health care providers should be aware that the use of quinolones for the treatment of gonococcal infection is no longer recommended due to increasing rates of resistance.

3. Health care providers should promptly report all diagnosed or suspected cases of gonorrhea to the Alaska Section of Epidemiology using the Rapid Telephonic Reporting system (561-4234 in Anchorage or 800-478-1700 statewide).

4. Health care providers should familiarize themselves with partner notification programs available in their locale and should encourage their patients with GC to participate in the confidential and timely notification of all partners at risk.

Reference